

## Churches in the Shenandoah Valley

Union Church  
Main St,  
Mt. Jackson, VA 22842



### A brief History

The land for the church and cemetery was given by Reuben Moore - his will written on June 16, 1822 states that he was giving one-half acre lot ...for the free use of a meeting House, school house and burying ground for ever to be free for all Christian Ministers of any society to preach....

Two years before Reuben Moore died, a brick church was built on the site in 1825 – local history states that it was at the instigation of Mrs Betsy Steenbergen of Mt. Airy, just south of Mt. Jackson - after the death of her husband William Steenbergen in 1834, she married a Lutheran minister, the Rev A.R. Rude.

No longer used as a church

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It was home for Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists and many other denominations until they found their own places of worship.

The cemetery is almost the history of Mt. Jackson – as well as the Steenbergens, it holds descendants of Reuben Moore, Daniel Gray, who was a soldier in the Revolutionary War, and died in Mt. Jackson on January 18, 1845 aged 81 years. Several Civil War soldiers are buried in the cemetery including Captain Ramsey Koontz who was killed at the Battle of Clifton on October 8, 1864. William Wellard died of wounds received at the Battle of Chancellorsville.

In 1934, a group of ladies who were concerned that the cemetery had accumulated trash and was overgrown with brambles and underbrush, organized the Mt. Jackson Garden Club, whose sole purpose was to restore the cemetery. With the help of many local people who donated materials and labor, the gravestones were straightened, repaired and reset by a stone mason. The total cost of this project amounted to \$5500. They have continued to assume the supervision of the care and maintenance to this day.

On September 10, 1963, at the request of the Mayor of Mt. Jackson, four trustees were appointed for the Union Church and cemetery – one from each of the area denominational churches – United Methodist, Episcopal, United Church of Christ and Lutheran.

*Written by Philip Crown, April, 2012*

*Reference: "The Union Church, Mt Jackson and Area Primitive Churches" by J. Floyd Wine*

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